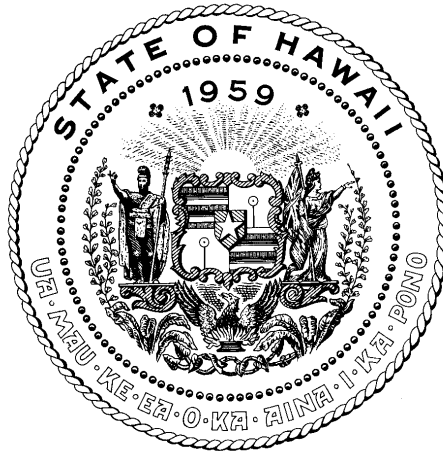


REPORT TO THE TWENTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE

2007 REGULAR SESSION

FIRE SUPPRESSION FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007



PREPARED BY

THE STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

IN RESPONSE TO
SECTION 124.1 of ACT 160, SESSION LAWS OF HAWAII 2006

NOVEMBER 2006

**REPORT TO THE TWENTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2007**

**FIRE SUPPRESSION FOR
FISCAL YEAR 2007**

PURPOSE

The following report is prepared in accordance with Section 124.1 of Act 160, Session Laws of Hawaii 2006, on the Department of Land and Natural Resources' utilization of funds for fire suppression, comparison of acres damaged by wildfires in previous years; & plans & activities to prevent more fires in the future.

This report covers activities that start from July 2006.

NUMBER OF FIRES

Since July 1, 2006, the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department), Division of Forestry and Wildlife has been involved in 11 wildfires. The wildfires were on Oahu (1), Molokai (1), Maui (4), and Hawaii (5). Total acres burned were 11,722 acres.

The table below illustrates acres burned, and what caused the fires.

Name of Fire	Island	Date	Acres Burned	Cause
Kanaha	Maui	July 4	3	Fireworks
Yokohama	Oahu	July 13	760	Unknown
Puu Anahulu	Hawaii	July 17	100	Unknown
PWW Stockyard	Hawaii	Aug. 10	3	Machinery
Honoulimaloo	Molokai	Aug. 11	4	Debris burning
Puu Anahulu Kipuka	Hawaii	Aug. 16	630	Lightning
Puu Mali	Hawaii	Aug. 29	400	Lightning
Maalaea	Maui	Sept. 1	3,942	Unknown
Puu Mali II	Hawaii	Sept. 9	400	Lightning
Polanui	Maui	Sept. 8	540	Unknown
Kaupo	Maui	Sept. 24	5,000	Arson
TOTAL ACRES BURNED: 11,722 acres				

Last (fiscal) year, the Department was engaged in 11 fires statewide that consumed 19,515 acres.

FIRES OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Kanaha fire burned within the Kanaha Wildlife Sanctuary, home of many threatened and endangered waterbirds including the Hawaiian stilt. No wildlife or habitat was lost.

The Yokohama fire burned adjacent to the Kuaokala Forest Reserve along the slopes bordering Kaena Point State Park. It burned into the United States (U.S.) Army's plant sanctuary along the western edge of Makua Valley.

The Puu Anahulu fires burned in the Puu Anahulu Game Management Area. No animals died or were injured.

The Maalaea fire threatened the Maalaea community, briefly closed the Honoapi'ilani Highway, overran the Lahaina Pali Trail, and came very close to burning into the Nene sanctuary near the West Maui Forest Reserve. No Nene died or were injured. The fire also threatened the Kaheawa wind energy facility. This fire qualified for reimbursement of suppression costs through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Fire Management Assistance Grant program. It is anticipated that the Department will be refunded 75% of the expenses that was incurred on the fire.

The Puu Mali fires burned in the Palila Critical Habitat fence enclosure on the western slope of Mauna Kea. Clusters of koa (*Acacia koa*) and mamane (*Sophora chrysophylla*) trees were scorched and burned. No Palila died or were injured.

The Kaupo Fire briefly threatened the Kahikinui community as the fire made its way up the slope toward the Kahikinui Forest Reserve.

INTERAGENCY COOPERATION

All of the fires above were suppressed cooperatively between the Department and fire management agencies statewide. These include the following agencies:

Federal Fire Department
Haleakala National Park
Hawaii Army National Guard
Hawaii County Fire Department
Honolulu Fire Department
Kaneohe Marine Corps Base Hawaii
Maui Fire Department
Pohakuloa Fire Department
U.S. Army

The State Civil Defense Agency and Maui County Civil Defense Agency were also instrumental in providing logistical and planning efforts on the Maalaea fire.

SUPPRESSION COST

The Department's cost associated with suppressing these fires is estimated to be approximately \$318,586. There are still repairs to be made to vehicles and supplies to be bought to replace what was spent on the fires. All repairs and replacement of personal protective gear is expected to be an additional \$15,000.

Name of Fire	Reg. Time	Overtime	Other*	Total Cost
Kanaha		6,457		6,457
Yokohama	12,500	2,525		15,025
Puu Anahulu	7,919	16,774	15,158	39,851
PWW Stockyard	1,246	853	338	2,437
Honoulimaloo	105			105
Puu Anahulu Kipuka	6,542	29,112	17,457	53,111
Puu Mali	10,362	37,783	11,215	59,360
Maalaea	10,365	38,210	2,423	50,998
Puu Mali II	10,450	38,550	12,545	61,545
Polanui	2,926	16,279	1,278	20,483
Kaupo	2,800	4,029	2,385	9,214
TOTAL:	\$65,215	\$190,572	\$62,799	\$318,586

*This includes helicopter and heavy equipment rental, hazard pay, night differential, meals, and supplies.

ACTIVITIES

Along with fire suppression, the Department's Fire Management Program also deals with fire prevention and education, and training. Part of the fire prevention and education programs includes visiting schools and providing educational materials at local fairs and events. Since July 2006, the Department was involved in the Makawao Rodeo Parade, the Kauai County Fair, the Kona Farm Fair, and the Hawaii County Fair. Smokey Bear also made appearances at these events.

The Department also conducted wildland fire training. The S-190, Introduction to Fire Behavior, S-130 Firefighter Training, and L-180 Leadership are basic courses that are broken down to two training sessions (80 hours) on Kauai and Maui. 44 personnel participated in the sessions. Personnel came from the following agencies:

Kauai Fire Department	Department of Land and Natural Resources
Maui Fire Department	Haleakala National Park
Americorps	Pacific Missile Range Facility – Barking Sands Fire Department

The Department expects to continue to train federal, state, and county firefighters throughout the year. This aspect of the Fire Management Program is the nucleus that incorporates interagency training opportunities for all statewide fire management agencies. Last year, the Department trained 247 personnel statewide. The Department continues to be in the forefront in wildland fire and other emergency management training.

The Department continues to maintain firebreaks within forest reserves, game management areas, and natural area reserves. Last year, over 147 miles of firebreak roads were maintained statewide. Beside mowing and the manual removal of vegetation, cattlegrazing was also used as a weed abatement alternative to keeping the vegetation in check.

The Department has been working with the National Weather Service in developing a “Red Flag” warning system. This system is based on temperature, wind speed, and other weather factors that determine whether or not firefighters are at a higher risk than normal should they be engaged in a wildfire situation for that day.

The Department assists communities-at-risk from wildfires via the national Firewise Program. It provides workshops and other technical assistance to these communities and provides direction on standards for fuel hazard reduction. It also seeks federal funding for communities. Last year, through the U.S. Forest Service’s State Fire Assistance Program, the Department was able to secure \$350,000 in federal funds for fuels hazard reduction and community wildfire protection plan development projects for the West Hawaii communities. This year, the Department secured \$646,300 for communities at risk.

CONCERNS

The Department continues to operate with very old equipment (fire trucks) acquired through the Federal Excess Personal Property Program. The equipment has been in use for more than 25 years. Parts are already difficult to come by or are nonexistent. It is becoming more difficult to respond to fires with archaic equipment that is constantly breaking down and in need of repair.

Based on the suppression expenses as described above, the Department has already surpassed the current fire contingency fund level of \$300,000 allocated for the fiscal year. The current level of \$300,000 is not adequate to cover the overtime expenses, personal protective equipment, repairs, and the cost of heavy equipment and helicopter rentals incurred for fire suppression.